

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 EB-08 ARA-10 /097 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TIMBS:REFRITTS:LGR:CCH
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IO - MR. TATU (SUBS)
P - MR. FORBES
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R 191621Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORKE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211436

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ID

SUBJECT: COMMITTEE OF 24: EAST TIMOR AND PUERTO RICO

1. SUMMARY. INDONESIAN AMB ASHARI CALLED UNDER INSTRUCTIONS ON UNDERSEC NEWSOM AUG 18 TO REQUEST US POSITION ON ANTICIPATED EAST TIMOR RESOLUTION AND OUTLINE GOI EFFORTS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EAST TIMOR. UNDERSEC USED OPPORTUNITY REQUEST SUPPORT BY INDONESIA FOR OUR POSITION ON PUERTO RICO AND NOTED BENEFITS OF ACCESS TO EAST TIMOR BY ICRC (AND CRS). ACTION REQUESTED: EMB JAKARTA SHOULD FOLLOW-UP AND SEEK INDONESIAN SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. EAST TIMOR: AMB ASHARI NOTED HE HAD COME TO SEEK UNDER SECY'S "ADVICE AND SUPPORT" ON EAST TIMOR. THE COMMITTEE OF 24 WOULD MEET ON AUG 24 AND THE ISSUE WAS INSCRIBED ON THE
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UNGA AGENDA. HE HOPED THE GOI COULD "COUNT ON" US SUPPORT. UNDERSEC REPLIED THAT WE USUALLY DID NOT SIGNAL OUR POSITIONS IN ADVANCE, BUT WE DO NOT FORESEE ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD CHANGE OUR PREVIOUS POSITION I.E. VOTING AGAINST A RESOLUTION, BUT NOT WORKING ACTIVELY TO SUPPORT INDONESIA. AMB. ASHARI EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION AS WELL AS HIS UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR LOW-PROFILE.

3. AMB. ASHARI THEN STATED INDONESIA IS "DOING ITS UTMOST" TO DEVELOP E. TIMOR NOTING PRESIDENT SUHARTO'S JULY VISIT WHICH INAUGURATED REGULAR AIRLINE SERVICE AS WELL AS ROAD IMPROVEMENT, TV AND A 4 TO 5 YEAR 17,000 HA. RICE IRRIGATION PROJECT TO MAKE E. TIMOR "SELF-SUFFICIENT IN FOOD". HE STRESSED THAT GOI MINFIN HAS CALCULATED THAT GOI EXPENDITURES ON DEVELOPMENT IN E. TIMOR OVER PAST TWO YEARS TOTALED R. 12 BILLION (27 MILLION DOLS) AND EXPENDITURES NEXT YEAR ARE ESTIMATED AT R. 10 BILLION. (22 MILLION DOLS) -- "MORE THAN DURING 350 YEARS OF PORTUGUESE COLONIZATION". NEVERTHELESS, POLITICAL PROBLEMS REMAIN.

4. UNDERSEC AGREED NOTING CONTINUING CONCERNS WITHIN PARTS OF ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS OVER THE "NATURE OF THE ISSUE INCLUDING LACK OF SELF-DETERMINATION". IT WOULD THUS BE 'VERY HELPFUL' IF OUTSIDE RELIEF AGENCIES COULD HAVE ACCESS TO E. TIMOR. HE WELL UNDERSTOOD EARLIER INDONESIAN PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE ICRC, BUT HOPED THE GOI WOULD KEEP AN ICRC VISIT IN MIND AS A HELPFUL STEP. HE ALSO NOTED GEN. MURDANI'S DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM AS WELL AS AMB. MASTERS ON INITIATING CRS ACCESS AS SOON AS THE GOVERNOR IN E. TIMOR IS CHANGED. AMB. ASHARI (AWARE OF THE CONTINUING DELAYS) SHOOK HIS HEAD SAYING THE CHANGE SHOULD OCCUR "...IN A FEW WEEKS -- MAYBE".
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5. AMB. ASHARI REVIEWED COUNTRY POSITIONS ON E. TIMOR REVEALED DURING THE RECENT NAM BELGRADE CONFERENCE. TOTALS SHOWED 22 FAVORING INDONESIA POSITION AND 18 AGAINST. (AMB NOTED AFTER THE MEETING THAT TREND OF SUPPORT FOR INDONESIA IS INCREASING).

6. PUERTO RICO - UNDER SECY NOTED HE WISHED USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE STATUS OF PUERTO RICO WHICH WOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSED IN CTTEE OF 24. HE REVIEWED PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN USUAL TERMS, BUT NOTED SPECIFIC IMPORTANCE OF RECENT PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION (JULY 25) WHICH INTER ALIA STATES USG WOULD ACCEPT INDEPENDENCE IF THAT WERE PUERTO RICAN CHOICE. AMB. ASHARI EXPRESSED SURPRISE AND UNDER SECY OFFERED PROVIDE COPY (DONE SUBSEQUENTLY). UNDER SECY STATED THAT THE USG WOULD "APPRECIATE THE CONSIDERATION OF ITS FRIENDS IN SUPPORTING A FURTHER POSTPONEMENT BY THE CTTEE OF 24 OF PUERTO RICO". HE CONCLUDED BY NOTING THAT CUBAN CHARGE OF SO-CALLED US "MILITARY OCCUPATION" SUBJECT TO RIDICULE AS PUERTO RICO HAS FREEDOM OF CHOICE AND US MILITARY PERSONNEL STATIONED THERE AMOUNT TO ONLY 414 ARMY, 47 AIR

FORCE AND 213 MARINES.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE AMB ASHARI LISTENED TO OUR
VIEWS ON PUERTO RICO, NO COMMITMENT WAS GIVEN. EMB
JAKARTA SHOULD FOLLOW-UP THIS CONVERSATION TO ENSURE GOI
SUPPORT. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE211436
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: REFRITTS:LGR:CCH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780340-0927
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780845/aaaabktt.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 00ed5160-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1684122
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMITTEE OF 24: EAST TIMOR AND PUERTO RICO
TAGS: PEPR, ID, US, PT, RQ, COMMITTEE OF 24
To: JAKARTA USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/00ed5160-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014